

REMARKS

Claims 1-11, 18, 19, 21, 22 and 42-47 remain in this application, of which Claims 1, 8, 18, 19, 21, 22, 42 and 45 are in independent form. Claim 1, 8, 18, 19, 21 and 22 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1-11, 18, 19, 21, 22 and 42-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Document (Tokkaihei) No. 9-282263 (Iijima et al.).

Initially, Applicants note that one of the counterpart Japanese Patent Applications on the basis of which priority benefit is claimed in this application (Japanese Patent Application No. 11-016331, 11-192300) has been patented as JPB3501707 with substantially the same claims as the present U.S. patent application, after overcoming rejections based on JPA09-282263 (Iijima et al.).

Independent Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus that comprises communication control means for receiving a read command from an external device, the read command specifying a memory address where data to be read out are stored, and memory for storing information about a device, that is mountable on, but not actually mounted on, the information processing apparatus in a memory area, from which the external device can read out data by using the read command. The device that is mountable on but not mounted on the information processing apparatus includes an attachable part through which that device is attached to the information processing

apparatus, and a function assist part for assisting a function of the information processing apparatus.

In the aspect of the invention recited in Claim 1, among other important features, information about a device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted on the information processing apparatus is stored. By virtue of this, a user is provided with useful knowledge about a device that is mountable on the apparatus, even when the device is not actually mounted.

JPA09-282263 (Iijima et al.) relates to a system in which a plurality of devices communicates with each other, which are connected by a communication control bus such as IEEE 1394 serial bus. According to *Iijima*, a PC inquires of other devices in the system about a node unique ID, creates a correspondence table of the node IDs and the node unique ID of the device based on responses from the respective devices (paragraph [0010]). When the PC searches the correspondence table and finds a device of which a node unique ID structure is not known, the PC inquires of the device about information and creates a correspondence table of the node ID and category information using the response (paragraph [0028]).

The *Iijima* system acquires, from the node unique ID, information about a device connected to the system, and stores device model information on the device in predetermined read-only memory areas (paragraph [0014]).

However, as shown in Fig. 5, the node unique ID of *Iijima* merely includes information about device type and company. Nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Iijima* that would teach, or even hint at, storing or otherwise handling information about a

device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted on the information processing apparatus.

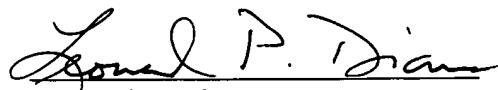
For at least this reason, Applicants believe strongly that Claim 1 is allowable over that document.

Independent apparatus Claims 8 and 42 recite similar characteristics to those of Claim 1 discussed above, and therefore, are also believed to be allowable for the above reason. Independent Claims 18, 19 and 45 are method claims corresponding to apparatus Claims 1, 8 and 42, and independent Claims 21 and 22 are medium claims corresponding to Claims 18 and 19. Accordingly, these claims are also believed to be patentable.

Early and favorable continued examination of the present application is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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